

2d. That "slavery and involuntary servitude, otherwise than for crimes, whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall be, and is hereby forever prohibited within the State."

3d. That it shall be the duty of the General Assembly to provide for the payment of all debts and obligations created or incurred by the State, otherwise than in aid of the late rebellion. But that "all debts and obligations created or incurred by the State, in aid of the late rebellion, directly or indirectly, are void, and no General Assembly of this State shall have power to assume or provide for the payment of the same, or any portion thereof."

These are safe and proper steps in the right direction, and such as were expected of the representatives of a loyal people.

But, in order to remove the last obstacle in the way of restoration, it is indispensable that the Legislature shall ratify the amendment to the Constitution of the United States prohibiting the existence of slavery throughout the United States. I herewith transmit to you a communication on this subject, from Hon. William H. Seward, Secretary of State, and also a certified copy of the joint resolution which has passed Congress on the subject, approved February, 1st, 1865.

I beg leave, gentlemen, most respectfully and earnestly to urge on you the propriety of ratifying this amendment unanimously, at the earliest practicable moment. It is the wish of our best friend, the President of the United States, that this shall be done. Such ratification cannot fail to hasten our restoration to the Union, and thus lay anew for us and our children the foundations of permanent prosperity and glory.

Under the provisions of an Ordinance passed by the Convention at its late session, I have appointed the Hon. B. F. Moore, the Hon. Richard S. Donnell, and William S.